

# Maryland Council on Open Data

Annual Report  
January 10, 2022



**The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.**  
Governor  
State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1925

**The Honorable William C. Ferguson IV**  
President of the Senate  
State House, H-107  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

**The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones**  
Speaker of the House  
State House, H-101  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

# INTRODUCTION

The Maryland Council on Open Data strives to better understand our citizens, improve access to data, and strengthen the use of information to best serve the people of Maryland. The efforts by the Council on Open Data were instrumental in improving data literacy across the state, advancing access to important information, and cultivating enhanced use of evidence-based analysis.

*"Maryland's Open Data Portals continue to be a great example of how state governments throughout the country can provide direct access to invaluable information to their citizens. Accessibility and accuracy of data is an integral part of government transparency, and the Hogan Administration continues its commitment to empowering its citizens by allowing them access to accurate government data. The Open Data Council's leadership throughout the years has played a key role in the growth and success of Maryland's Open Data Program and I am proud to serve with so many dedicated public servants in our efforts to continue that success."* – Michael G. Leahy, Maryland Department of Information Technology Secretary and Council on Open Data Chair

Although much of the Council on Open Data's focus has been on mitigating the effects of the pandemic, our overarching goal continues to be the collection and curation of data for the benefit of all endeavors. The Council has always strived to service all of Maryland's organizations, both public and private, by making it possible for them to access easily interpreted and relevant data.

*"Providing transparency, accountability, and disseminating to the public information so they can stay informed and make the best possible decisions is a fundamental role of state service. It has been a privilege to aid in this role and serve as the Vice-Chair to the Council on Open Data."* – Allison L.M. Cordell, Director, Governor's Office of Performance Improvement and Council on Open Data Vice Chair

We present this year's Council on Open Data Annual Report with the continued commitment to apply data in ways that provide, inform, and positively impact the lives and livelihoods of Marylanders.

This year turned out to be a year of adversity and responsive transformations. In response, the Council on Open Data assessed the vision and mission of the group. The vision and mission statements were updated to reflect, refine and accommodate the evolution and maturation of open data in Maryland.

## VISION

Curate and make readily available all useful, relevant, and releasable data created by the State of Maryland and select Local Governments to businesses, residents, visitors, and civil servants of the State.

## MISSION

To promote easy and direct access to data created by governments within the State of Maryland to empower Marylanders to effect change, make better and more informed decisions, and enable state agencies and coordinating offices to better deliver services to constituents, businesses, and visitors to the State of Maryland.

## LEGISLATION

The Maryland Open Data Act (state government, chapter 69, section 10-1501 through 10-1504) was established in 2015. The intent of the act is “that open data be machine readable and released to the public in ways that make the data easy to find, accessible, and usable [...]”. In addition, the act ensures that open data does not include data that would compromise the security, privacy or integrity of systems, programs or persons.

## COUNCIL WORKGROUPS

The **Administration and Management Workgroup** was established to develop guidelines of governance for the Council workgroups that extend beyond the statutory specifications. Advise on the oversight necessary to sustain the open data efforts, outreach necessary to expand the reach and impact of the open data program and the foresight to recommend legislation and regulation. The Workgroup met multiple times this year to discuss:

- Updates to the vision and mission of the Council;
- Standards and monitoring of data quality and data reliability;
- Definition of liability and responsible of hosting open data;
- Standards of data tagging of government hosted data;
- Adoption of new licensing to manage distribution and credit source(s) of data; and
- Expansion of federated open data with additional government partners.

The **Outreach and Training Workgroup** was created to draft the communications and collateral for increasing awareness about Maryland’s open data. The Workgroup develops and implements ways to encourage the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, as well as local entities, to increase participation in Maryland’s open data. The Workgroup met this year to discuss:

- Engagement of agencies to share, train and guide open data use;
- Informing research and public librarians on Maryland’s open data assets;
- Increase of social media activities to promote and share open data use cases; and
- Improvement of the discovery of Maryland open data through search engine optimization.

## MARYLAND’S OPEN DATA PROGRAM

With the launch of the Open Data Portal in 2012 and the passing of the Open Data act in 2015, Maryland has been a leader in Open Data for nearly a decade. This commitment to transparent governance has resulted in many historic successes:

- Launch of millions of real property assessment records onto the open data portals;
- Launch, modernization and maintenance of the Data Freshness Dashboard, delivering transparency on government data assets completeness and timeliness;
- Updates to the Open Data Policy and Standards to reflect current mission and goals;
- Performance of inspections on data submitted to and hosted on the open data portals;
- Outreach to the private, non-profit, and academic sectors to inform them of the resources the Open Data Portal have to offer;

- Training sessions to inform government employees on how to properly maintain data on the open data portals;
- Research and application of search engine optimization to improve discovery of data;
- Publishing of Maryland's Operating Budget as open data and the launch of an interactive dashboard to help citizens explore budget data; and
- Redesign of the Open Data Portals to more effectively serve data to end users.

Such successes and partnerships allow the Maryland Open Data Program to continually improve the resources offered by the state's open data portals and renew the commitment to our mission and values: curation of and easy access to data.

## FEATURED ACCOMPLISHMENT

During the September 2021 Council on Open Data meeting, the Department of Natural Resources showcased their mobile application, AccessDNR. Collaborative work amongst teams and platforms, including the open data portal, resulted in the launch of this popular site.

The Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) AccessDNR application has always offered users quick and easy access to hunting and fishing licenses, regulations, and other important information about outdoor recreation in Maryland. This past year, the capabilities of the app have expanded even further with the integration of the Open Data portal through the web.

In the past, AccessDNR would need to be manually updated with new information on hunting season dates, water access maps, and other relevant data. Through collaboration with the Department of Information Technology (DoIT), DNR has updated AccessDNR so that updates now happen in real time with Maryland's Open Data platform powered by the TylerTechnologies' Socrata product. Now users only need to look in one convenient spot for any information on their outdoor excursions.

Continuous updates to the application make it one of the most reliable and versatile new resources of the state government, and the flexibility of the open data platform makes updates to content easy and quick. This activity reaffirms Maryland's commitment to usability and freely-provided data.



## KEY INITIATIVE #1: BETTER UNDERSTANDING OUR CITIZENS

### *Ensure awareness of available data and provide data that reflects popular topics*

Communication with Marylanders is essential to the success of the open data statute, but this idea goes both ways—the Council on Open Data must effectively communicate with our citizens what resources we can provide them, while citizens convey to us what information they need to see. To further this effort, we reach out to organizations both within and outside the state government to ensure we get the entire perspective of the constituency. In addition, the state is committed to collaboration between departments, agencies, and offices as we continue to provide relevant data to the public.

### **Data Freshness**

As leaders in the open data community, Maryland's Department of Information Technology (DoIT) and the Governor's Office of Performance Improvement (GOPI) have an obligation to ensure that the information we provide is cleaned, standardized, and relevant to our constituents. This philosophy is the driving force behind DoIT's and GOPI's Data Freshness campaign.

Because multiple organizations and actors contribute to the open data portals, it is essential that each of these data coordinators only upload up-to-date and standardized datasets to the portals. With cooperation from the departments' designated data coordinators, DoIT and GOPI held regular meetings to guide contributors through the state's plan for keeping this commitment to open data.

During these meetings, DoIT and GOPI presented the department's chosen data coordinators with a list of the assets and datasets that the department maintains on the portals. Our aim with these meetings was two-pronged:

1. To inform data coordinators which of their assets are in need of an update and ask that they consult with their departments to see which of these assets they feel are worth updating and which are no longer worth keeping on the portals.
2. If needed, to educate users on the software's functionalities. Familiarizing data coordinators with Socrata, the data management system the portals use, which will allow them to operate it with greater efficiency.

The Data Freshness campaign ensures a continued commitment to the open data policy by all of the state's organizations, and it provides employees with the resources for doing so.

### **Responding to Current Events**

The vaccine locator site, [covidvax.maryland.gov](https://covidvax.maryland.gov), was launched in January of 2021 in anticipation of the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines. Created in collaboration between the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and the Department of Information Technology (DoIT), the site offers visitors a tool for locating COVID-19 vaccination sites and scheduling appointments to receive them, using open data hosted on the



Maryland Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Data Catalog.

The vaccine locator site, [covidvax.maryland.gov](https://covidvax.maryland.gov) adds greater utility to Maryland's coronavirus recovery page, [coronavirus.maryland.gov](https://coronavirus.maryland.gov), by offering data and analysis tools directly to Marylanders. By embedding the appointment pages of vaccine providers directly on the site, covidvax.maryland.gov offers a user-friendly interface with minimal interruptions as visitors schedule their vaccination appointments.

Continuous updates to the data and the site make it one of the most reliable and important resources on the [coronavirus.maryland.gov](https://coronavirus.maryland.gov) page. This activity reaffirms Maryland's commitment to accountability in its government's recovery to the pandemic.

## KEY INITIATIVE #2: IMPROVE ACCESS TO DATA

*Deliver access to open data that best serves the interests of our portal visitors*

### Maryland Open Data Portals

Maryland Open Data Portal - [opendata.maryland.gov](https://opendata.maryland.gov)

Maryland GIS Data Catalog - [data.imap.maryland.gov](https://data.imap.maryland.gov)

The State of Maryland hosts two open data portals that invite visitors to search, explore, download and connect to over 1,700 datasets contributed and maintained by dozens of partners at the local, county, and state levels of government.

In total, the portal has seen:

- 618 assets added throughout 2021
- 3x as many logins since 2020
- 105,000 more user searches than 2020
- 70,000 views and downloads of assets related to the COVID-19 pandemic

### Learning Materials

Part of what makes the aforementioned data freshness campaign effective is the provision of learning materials for those who need to know how to properly navigate the open data portals and how to upload and maintain datasets. It is one thing to make citizens aware of the existence of the data portals and to assure them that the data there are regularly updated to meet their needs; it is another to teach them how to use this data.

There has been an expansion of the training materials available for use by both regular, unregistered users and users with an account on the portal.

- Users can now freely consult [the portal's training asset](#) to give themselves an overview of the functions of the data management system.
- Internal documents are now being circulated to users with maryland.gov email addresses to guide them through use of the portals.

## KEY INITIATIVE #3: STRENGTHEN USE OF OPEN DATA

### *Improve the ability to understand data context, constructs, and value*

#### Next Generation 9-1-1

Maryland's open data portals continue to support the effort to bring the state's 9-1-1 call system into the 21st century. Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) will rely upon the 24 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) located in each Maryland county to increase the accuracy of incidents' locations through the use of advanced location-based technology.

NG9-1-1 utilizes the [PSAP boundary layer \(available for download on the data.imap.maryland.gov site\)](https://data.imap.maryland.gov/site) to connect callers with the appropriate PSAP. Maintained statewide with collaboration between the 24 PSAPs and the state, this vital information is used by Apple and Google to further enhance location accuracy of a call made on a mobile device. The PSAP boundary layer is actively maintained and updates are regularly made available to continue to contribute to quick and accurate responses by emergency call taking personnel.

For more information on the NG9-1-1 effort, users can visit: <https://911.maryland.gov/>

#### Maryland Public Water Access

Enjoying a trip to the beach or using one of Maryland's many publicly accessible waterfronts requires knowing where they are. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has created an [interactive map using DoIT's ArcGIS software](#) to document everywhere in Maryland a potential beachgoer can enter the water on public property.

Updated regularly as new information comes to light and recreational water areas change (most recently in June of 2021), this dataset provides a range of information on water access, including the caretaker of the property, the presence and size of boat ramps at the facility, the size of the parking lot, and just about any other information that might be relevant to creating a delightful day at the beach.

Public Water Access Map

<https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=434ab9c6980c4ea2a45f55ca6dcefc8a>

Metadata for this dataset

<https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=234792644bd341ddb289398d7c7bccad>

#### Annual Average Daily Traffic

As pandemic quarantines wind down and some Marylanders return to their daily commutes, workers will want to remain aware of what sorts of traffic they can expect. While a map of daily traffic patterns can typically be accessed by most modern GPS devices, the Department of Transportation's Annual Average Daily Traffic Locator takes this information a step further by also providing the types of vehicles travelling each road. For researchers, various academics, and other

parties who might be interested in a look at the average number of cars on these roads each day, the dataset is able to provide those insights as well. After 2020's steep decline in traffic, 2021 and 2022 are sure to be busier than ever, and Marylanders would be wise to consult this resource to optimally manage their time.

Annual Average Daily Traffic Map

<https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=223148a698214294a7b43ed612a4e67d>

Metadata for the dataset

<https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=223148a698214294a7b43ed612a4e67d>

## Spotted Lanternfly Project

The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) has been fighting the spread of the spotted lanternfly, an invasive species that feasts on a wide range of the crops Maryland farmers depend upon. As part of this effort, the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) has made use of DoIT's [Geographic Information Services](#) by [asking Maryland residents to catalogue their sightings of this pest](#).

As a result of this collaborative project, MDA has successfully catalogued thousands of sightings and [quarantined outdoor objects](#) favored by the bug (construction waste, plant and plant parts, landscaping tools, etc.) in Harford County and Cecil County to prevent further spread. Grassroots efforts like these would be much more difficult without the open data tools used to keep Maryland's agricultural community informed.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021: YEAR IN REVIEW

### Executive Orders 01.01.2021.09 and 01.01.2021.10

In July of 2021, the Governor announced the creation of Chief Data Officer and Chief Privacy Officer positions via Executive Orders. These positions were created to support the advanced efforts within the State of Maryland to protect the security of systems used to provide services to Marylanders. As part of the responsibilities of government, ensuring the security and privacy of the data housed within these systems is a top priority.

### Advancing Transparency in Government Spending

With the passage of House Bill 251, the Maryland Transparency Portal (MTP) was implemented in order to provide Marylanders a place to view how the state is allocating its budget, specifically with regard to the State's operating budget, grants and loans being provided by the State, and vendor payments.

Once receiving updates every quarter, the MTP now receives monthly updates to its data in an effort to maintain the trust and transparency between the state government and its constituents. The portal is now including non-budgeted agencies in its reports alongside budgeted agencies as well.



## **Establish a Balance Between Access and Security**

DoIT will soon implement a new sign-up procedure for the Maryland Open Data Portal, ensuring each user has the appropriate access level and set of permissions. With more data published and greater numbers of users on the platform, its due and proper administration becomes an even more important task. Maryland's Open Data team has been providing more varied privileges to new portal users, which will allow them to do more than just view datasets uploaded to the portals. Depending on their assigned role, they will be able to view site-wide analytics, view and approve the publishing of datasets, and delete assets from the portals, among other things.

## **Updates to Policies and Standards for Open Data**

Maryland's Open Data Policy and Standards were last updated in August of 2018. As their mission and vision evolve and their key initiatives change to meet new goals, it is critical that this document change as well. To that end, the Policy and Standards have been reviewed and are being updated to better represent the purpose behind each new project undertaken by the Council and the Open Data teams.

## **GovTech Government Experience Award Winner**

The State of Maryland was honored as an Overall State Government Experience Winner in the annual GovTech Government Experience Award. Evaluated on efforts across the state, open data played a significant role in the submission with highlights of the availability of more than 60 data layers associated with the State's COVID-19 website, the innovative growth of Maryland's Open Data Portal and the State's strong partnerships regarding open data with local government jurisdictions and access to open data through APIs.

## **Maryland Digital Government Summit**

The Maryland Digital Government Summit hosted by GovTech seamlessly transitioned to a virtual format and was jam-packed with vital information technology information and insights. During the panel discussion "The Past Year's Silver Lining", the challenges posed by the pandemic were turned into an opportunity when Maryland's open data portals were leveraged to start sharing vital health statistics with the public, within days of the Governor's declared emergency.

## **Maryland Association of Counties Summer Conference**

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) provided an opportunity for the State to promote Maryland's Open Data Portal and MD iMAP, Maryland's Mapping Portal at the MACo 2021 Summer Conference in Ocean City, MD.

## **Special Achievement in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Award Winner**

The State of Maryland received the Special Achievement in GIS Award in recognition of outstanding achievements using GIS technology to power [coronavirus.maryland.gov](https://coronavirus.maryland.gov), Maryland's central hub for COVID-19 response information. The State of Maryland was selected to receive this award from a pool of more than 100,000 nominations worldwide.

# MARYLAND OPEN DATA IN THE NEWS



## Harvard Kennedy School Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation

Maryland's Open Data Program and related projects were highlighted in a number of media publications throughout 2021.

<https://datasmart.ash.harvard.edu/news/article/data-smart-city-pod-episode-three>

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## Statescoop Radio

Listen: GIS Addressed, COVID-19, One Year In

<https://statescoop.com/podcast/pandemic-gis-state-technology/>

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## The Office of the Governor

Governor Hogan Announces New Chief Privacy Officer and Chief Data Officer for State of Maryland

<https://governor.maryland.gov/2021/11/10/governor-hogan-announces-new-chief-privacy-officer-and-chief-data-officer-for-state-of-maryland/>

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## Eye on Annapolis

State Resources to Help You Grow Your Annapolis-Based Business - Maryland's Open Data Portal

<https://www.eyeonannapolis.net/2021/10/state-resources-to-help-you-grow-your-annapolis-based-business-marylands-open-data-portal/>

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## Technical.ly

Watch: The Scott administration talked open data and digital equity at Baltimore Data Week 2021

<https://technical.ly/baltimore/2021/07/26/mayor-scott-data-week/>

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## Maryland Association of Counties Conduit Street

Data drives policy - counties can use Maryland's Free Open Data Portal and MD iMAP to inform decision making and educate the public on important topics.

<https://conduitstreet.mdcounties.org/2021/08/26/marylands-open-data-portal-can-be-a-resource-for-counties/>

# LIST OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

## **Executive Branch Agency Secretaries and Coordinating Office Directors (25)**

Secretary of Information Technology (Chair)  
**Michael G. Leahy**

Director of the Governor's Office of Performance Improvement (Vice Chair)  
**Allison L.M. Cordell**

Secretary of Agriculture  
**Joseph Bartenfelder**

Secretary of the Environment  
**Ben H. Grumbles**

Secretary of Natural Resources  
**Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio**

Secretary of Planning  
**Robert S. McCord, Esq.**

Secretary of Transportation  
**Gregory I. Slater**

Secretary of Housing and Community Development  
**Kenneth C. Holt**

Secretary of Commerce  
**Kelly M. Schulz**

Secretary of General Services  
**Ellington Churchill, Jr.**

State Superintendent of Schools  
**Mohammed Choudhury**

Secretary of Health  
**Dennis R. Schrader**

Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services  
**Robert L. Green**

Secretary of State Police  
**Col. Woodrow W. (Jerry) Jones, III**

Director of Assessments and Taxation  
**Michael L. Higgs, Jr.**

Secretary of Budget and Management  
**David R. Brinkley**

Adjutant General of the Military Department  
**Maj. Gen. Timothy E. Gowen**

Acting Secretary of Emergency Management  
**Russell J. Strickland**

Secretary of Labor  
**Tiffany P. Robinson, Esq.**

Secretary of Human Services  
**Lourdes R. Padilla**

Governor's Homeland Security Advisor  
**Walter F. (Pete) Landon**

Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth & Victim Services  
**V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.**

Executive Director of the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems  
**Theodore R. Delbridge, M.D.**

Executive Director of the Department of Legislative Services  
**Victoria L. Gruber, Esq.**

State Archivist  
**Elaine R. Bachmann**

**Appointee from Senate and Appointee from House of Delegates (2)**

Senate of Maryland  
**Senator Susan C. Lee**

House of Delegates of Maryland  
**Representative Bonnie L. Cullison**

**Appointees of elected officials or employees from local entities to represent each of the following groups of counties (5):**

Allegany County, Frederick County, Garrett County, and Washington County  
**John E. (Bud) Gudmundson**

Caroline County, Cecil County, Dorchester County, Kent County, Queen Anne's County, Somerset County, Talbot County, Wicomico County, and Worcester County  
**The Honorable Travis Marion**

Anne Arundel County, Calvert County, Charles County, and St. Mary's County  
**The Honorable Malinda Miles**

Montgomery County and Prince George's County  
**Harash N. (Sonny) Segal**

Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County, Harford County, and Howard County  
**Rob Livermore**

**Appointees from the Private, Private Utility, Academic, or Nonprofit Sectors (5)**

Private Sector — **Scott Shaffer**

Academic Sector — **Linda M. Loubert, Ph.D.**

Private Sector — **Elliott Plack**

Private Sector — **Cheryl Knott**

Private Sector — **Steve Palmer**

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